





that is the real truth for all it seems so strange."

Mrs. Eldridge remained silent; she was naturally a very timid woman, and her fears were aroused by the mystery of the occurrence. "I could have a spite against an innocent girl like Norah," she thought; "who could want to bring her into trouble?"

Michael Eldridge had been a kind-hearted fellow, far too generous and obliging for his own worldly good, and he was not in any way ashamed of his trying to injure his defenseless child. "Except Mr. Barrill, there never was any one that I know of who had a d— like against your poor father," she said, following out the theme of her thoughts. "And you are too young and innocent, Norah, to have any one speak ill-will toward you on your own account. I cannot understand this business."

"Don't let us think any more about it, then, until to-morrow morning," said Norah, wearily. "I am tired enough to sleep, in spite of the cold or anything else. The tea is very good, and we have a good fire here; and I can tell you, Norah, that you are a good girl, but it seems as if I could not hold up my head to eat or drink, I am so very, very weary."

She wrapped her shawl round her, and dropped down where she sat, while Rhoda gathered all the covering her could spare, and put it over her to keep her warm.

"I can creep in at the foot," said the generous girl; "Norah let me sleep all last night in the warm place, and sat up in the cold herself, poor dear."

#### CHAPTER V.

THE POLICE STATION.

When Norah sprang up, rested and refreshed, and began to brush the bare floor and tidy the miserable room in which her mother and sister still slept, a light knock sounded at the door.

Sister was washing her face and hands in the ice cold water she had brought in from a barrel at the back of the shanty, and stopping to dry them before answering the unusual summons, it was reported.

To her surprise, Molly Patchell, the girl who had encountered the morning before, and to whose friendly generosity she owed the sole food of the family for the day stood on the threshold with a large paper in her hands.

"For you, Norah," she said, dropping it in Norah's arms. "I baked 'em myself in the oven, and they're good."

Whatever that was, Norah was already aware of their warmth by feeling, and waiting for neither thanks nor explanation, Molly grinned and ran away, leaving her new friend to discover a dozen hot, nicely-roasted potatoes, that the girl had prepared for their breakfast.

She was more grateful than she could express, and her naturally hopeful, courageous spirit revived as she knew her mother and sister were sure of food for at least one day more.

She had almost forgotten the occasion of her alarm and excitement the night before, and when she awoke with a start, was preparing for breakfast, she took out the watch and examined it carefully.

"GEORGE BLAND" was engraved on the inner case, and was a heavy gold time-piece, evidently of great value. "I'll start out with it, mother," she said, "I know the way to the chief officer's room, and I'll go in there, and say just all I know about it."

Mrs. Eldridge looked uneasy, and seemed to fear some pending calamity. "I'll give you my word, Norah," she said; "they may think you know more about it than you care to tell them; and they may keep you."

"I am not the least bit afraid," said Norah, laughing. "They must believe me, because, I will tell only the exact truth."

She put on her hood, and tried to look as tidy as her poor robes would admit.

"Who knows but I may find something to-day; I feel as if there was a good time coming for us all, so cheer up, dear mother, and Rhoda, and wish me good fortune."

"I know that I might have the hood, and try if I can't get a place to-day," her sister said.

"You could not take the watch, I know," Norah said; "besides, I have a right to it, and the story of your finding it will tell you why."

He drew a written paper towards him as he said this, and perused it while Norah, trembling and sick at heart, related the incident once more.

"Humph, doesn't vary in a syllable," muttered the old man, his hands clasped; "I'll be back in time to-morrow morning, and get another paper before him, he asked her name, residence, employment, etc., putting down her answers until he came to the last, when he looked up with the pen in his hand and said:

"Nothing to do, and poor that's against you," and seemed to consider, but finally decided to let her go up if there's anything further about this; the gentleman's being absent for the coming week makes it awkward about keeping you on hand till the article is restored to him. I hope it's all right on your account, and now I would advise you as a friend to your son to do to do as you can. Idle folks are apt to get into scrapes, and that won't last long."

"Do you think your best plan is to make a thief of her?" asked the other, doubtfully.

"I'll just say 'tis. If you want her hunted down till she jumps into the river, I ain't your man. I'd rather run the risk of telling some pious cow the truth, and getting the girl her rights, if I was to be nabbed for it myself."

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Rhoda stood a moment at the door looking out, her eyes half closed; it was still colder in the street, and she ran in, shivering, and shut the door.

As long as she had remained in view, a short, dark complexioned man, with a slouching air, who stood in the shadow of the old shed next door, kept himself out of sight, but when he found the coast clear, he started after Norah, and dogged her steps determinedly.

He had a hard, cunning face, with little keen, close-set eyes, and a lowering brow above them. His nose had been broken, and a great scar traversing his upper lip gave his face a sinister aspect, and his white hair had had a slight shock, threateningly together, and compressing his lips until they lost color.

This fiend had performed in a forcible manner, when he saw the object of his parent's avoid all the cross streets where the pawnbrokers and second-hand shop were, holding steadily on, as if he had a definite object in view.

"What can the young 'un be up to?" he thought, excitedly; "if she acts like a sensible girl and sells the ticket, the money will do her family good, and I can have her bagged for a year or two where she will be comfortable, and have a sum out of her; she is a good girl, and will never trouble him; for after a woman's once been in prison, she's fit to go to the devil with her patch; there's no go back for her after that."

"Pshaw, why can't the girl hurry up and get the job done; I'm tired dog-tired after her."

At that instant he reached the door of the police station, and turning, went in.

Her unison secret gave an ejaculation of angry surprise at the act, and did not wait to see its sequel; then the neighbor household seemed unpleasant to him, and he made swiftly and sneakingly away, while Norah, totally unconscious of his presence, went in.

A large man, with a smooth, florid face, and gray hair and moustache, stood writing on a tall desk, with a glazed cap on.

After looking nervously around on all

nodes, Norah approached and addressed herself to this person, producing the watch as she did so.

She was naturally modest and retiring; necessity alone had given her courage to meet the world, and when she had the temerity to tell the story of her finding the time-piece, she faltered almost unutterably for a moment or two.

"There don't be frightened," said the man, kindly. "Sit down, take breath, and begin over again."

He seated her, and she glaced cap and amused curiously at her, while she obeyed, and commanding herself reluctantly as succinctly as possible her adventure with the strange gentleman and the rough fellow who had jostled her on the street corner in passing.

When she told him the officer couched slightly and looked serious, but taking it from her hand he examined it without making any remark.

"At length he said:

"I think I know the gentleman you own this watch, and may as well tell you that the watch is not yours, for you never heard of him before, and he substitutes your story."

When she told him the officer couched slightly and looked serious, but taking it from her hand he examined it without making any remark.

"Come, I'll help you, and show you how to cut before you can possibly be nabbed. There's a place handy that will do the trick in buying what you need. Stay there, and when you get supper and a good fire for the poor traveler that's shivering and starving at home."

Norah looked at him with dilating eyes, as if she believed the form of the evil one must needs fit with his words.

"I'll help you, and show you how to cut before you can possibly be nabbed. There's a place handy that will do the trick in buying what you need. Stay there, and when you get supper and a good fire for the poor traveler that's shivering and starving at home."

Norah closed the door upon her as soon as she had uttered this, and went to the window, and there she heard him called, and to her terror she heard him take the key in the other side.

She looked all around; it contained only the chair on which she sat, a stationary bench extending along one side of the wall, and a high glazed window.

Here she sank down panting and struggling, and leaned her throbbing head upon her knees.

The man who had addressed her had at first made a movement as if to pursue her, but a hand on his shoulder restrained him, and a much taller man, as roughly dressed as himself, accosted him in a low tone.

"You've scared the girl and made a fool of yourself; do you always manage your business as well as this, Matt?"

"What, captain, is it you?" cried the man, after a long surprised stare. "Well, if I'd known you it hadn't been for your voice. You're a good one, I suppose, but you are, you understand the business, you do."

"Never mind me," returned the captain, gruffly; "it seems I need understand something when I have a brother for a tool. Why did you frighten the girl, and let her escape?"

"I'm afraid I'll tell her," answered Matt.

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"Dear! Dear! Dear me! How religion has advanced since I was a girl!" said my kind old grandmother, as she quietly folded her knitting and looked out of the window.

HOW HE WAS TEMPTED.—A member of the colored church was the other day in the police station, and was in an acquaintance and seeking to have his change into better paths, but the friend said that he was too often tempted to permit him to become a Christian.

"Whar' ye back skee, den ye can't come up and stand temptation?" said ye

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wretchedness, for she stood like one in a dream, looking wistfully at the warm wooden shawls and fur-trimmed gloves hanging round her as if with no definite idea of what next to do.

"A man, I suppose, you might easily find to take care of her, if you find the time-piece, she faltered almost unutterably for a moment or two.

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#### FACETIA.

ENGLAND'S WAR STRENGTH.

The annual estimate for the present year, as brought before the House of Commons by Mr. Gladstone, which is shown in the paper that England has at the present moment an army of 100,278 men, and a force of 372 guns, exclusive of those on colonial duty.

Of the same authority, there are 43,739 men and file of infantry with their regiments, and 1,000 with the brigade headquarters. But after deducting the men of the navy, and the army of the colonies, there is a large force of 100,000 men, including the army of India, which is the largest in the world.

—MURKIN'S HONESTY.—During the rain the other day a party stepped into Mr. Merrill's grocery and asked for the loan of a umbrella.

"You're a pretty obliging man," observed a customer, after the stranger stepped out.

"That's a mighty honest fellow," claimed Mr. Merrill. "An honest man is a good man."

"Don't be a fool and stare at me," said the customer, "I'm not a fool."

"I'm not a fool, but I'm a fool."







September 25, 1875.

out on the bed and the chairs piled of snowy white things, edged with the finest lace and embroidery; skirts full of the minutest possible tucks; and wraps of cashmere and of chintz, with gay little vines and figures running over them; dresses of silk and muslin, with doublets, skirts and bows and buttons, wonderful to see!

Last of all there was a large white box, and folded in it was the loveliest dress, Polly Tupton thought, she had ever seen.

A white silk, heavy and batiste, for the bodice; and on it miracles of blue and flowers; just the tenderest, most beautiful shade that ever peeped out of any field.

"How do you like it, Polly?" Mrs. Fields asked, enjoying her amazement.

"Will it do to be married in?"

"To be married yes, ma'am. But the dress is done already, and she is tired of it."

"And is there never to be but one bride for the sun to shine on?" We have thought it all over, dear Polly, and have decided to have a double wedding next Thursday. You and Phyllis have shared evil days, and now you must share evil days, and the same days.

The dress is Edgar's gift," she continued, as she saw that Polly was too much overcome to speak, "and the rest of the things are from your mother, dear. If I had selected the dress, it should have been all white; but there's no accounting for a man's taste, and this is her, Polly, to wear ruffles, too!"

And tossing off the covers there was exposed to view a train of ruffles, so much like those over which Polly had been busying herself, that, for a moment, she thought they were the same.

"Old and good ruffles and ruffles in my, in my child, and Mrs. Edgar Fields must not be out of the fashion!"

One moment Polly stood, and feasted her eyes; the next she had both arms around Mrs. Field's neck, and was whispering in her ear.

No words of thanks, not refusals to take and wear the pretty things, not regrets of her own unworthiness—none of these.

It was only two words she spoke, but they came straight from the heart.

My

Hour after that, everything was easy, Polly told her just what she had been thinking of that evening, and thanked her in words that were eloquent with real feeling.

And Mrs. Fields locked the door, and perched herself to watch on the wonderful dress; and when she had turned her round and round to admire her, kissed her on both cheeks, and asked:

"Shall it be next Thursday, dear?"

And Polly blushed as red as a rose as she whispered:

"I don't see how I can help it!"

### CHAPTER XXXIII.

#### WEDDING BELLS.

"With a white hand like a lady, And a heart as merry as Spring, I'll be a bride to the wedding-bell, For a golden wedding-ring."

As the earth with eve is bounded, And the Winter-world with Spring, So is the world with the wedding-bell, With a golden wedding-ring.

"This old world is scarce worth seeing, Till Love waves his purple wing, And we gauge the tides of being, Thro' a golden wedding-ring.

"Would you dress for Edom nearer, And the toils of life be bearing, You must seek the magic mirror Of a golden wedding-ring."

"There's no jewel so worth wearing, That a toil of life can bring, There's a true love worth comparing With a golden wedding-ring."

With story-readers, as a general rule, a story ends when the wedding-bells ring!

With those of us who are dubbed story-tellers, who watch the checkered life, and have a checkered life, with its joys and trials, its glad and sorrowful days—why sympathize with each new emotion, and love the dear creature of our fancy, it is quite a different thing.

The best of the story begins, just when the wedding-bells ring.

On that day of day to whose dawning we have brought our sons, the skies were blue, and the earth was fair; and the sweet winds, wandering up and down the world, brought tidings of peace.

Mrs. Hawthorne's face was unclouded by a single regret, for she believed that she was giving her only child to Darley Gifford, who was securing her best earthly happiness.

Darley himself was proud and satisfied, and Phyllis was content.

Wise little Polly Tupton was radiant.

And Edgar, searching his mother's face, felt that he had chosen wisely, and that the world was his, and he had his breast, and rowed in his own heart that she should never know a sorrow that he could avert.

And the wedding-bells rang!

Load and clear, as if they told the burden of their load, happy hearts, and the load of burdened love.

And four happy hearts in their youthful courage did take up the story, and gird themselves for the telling, while softly, into a tender silence, the sound of the bells died away.

Phyllis and Darley went home with Mrs. Hawthorne, for neither of them could bear to think of a divided house.

Phyllis declared that she did not wish to travel, and should feel much happier to settle down quietly at home, with the two dearest friends she had ever had.

But Mrs. Fields declared that Polly must go to the wedding of the world's happier auspices; and she had ever seen it before, and as her wedding-present to Edgar was a check for five thousand dollars, he thought he could not do better than to present both his mother and Polly, by using it as she had desired.

They went to England, Germany, France and Italy, and when they returned, no one world ever had dreamed that Mrs. Edgar Fields was not born to purple and fine lines.

Mrs. Fields had bought and furnished the house next to her own, and our little Polly reigned there, a sweet and gentle Queen, in the perpetual joy of her husband's heart, and, in her mother's eyes, a very marvel of grace and fair ladyhood.

Doctor Matthews, who still has his bachelor quarters near Hawthorne Banks, is a frequent visitor at Darley's house; and as often as he sees their wedded felicity, threatens to go and hunt up the old boy, and bring him and his crippled Jamie, and do likewise!

Whether he will ever make good his words remains to be seen!

And Phyllis, whose life began in the sunshine, but who has known so much sorrow and trouble, has found in the consolation of her dear mother's presence, and the security of her husband's love, full recompence for every sad hour of her life.

[THE END.]

DAVID MATSON.

We suppose all our readers have read the sorrowful story of "Enough Ardor" and the poor boy too fond of his great English past? It is the story of a white silk, heavy and batiste, for the boudoir; and on it miracles of blue and flowers; just the tenderest, most beautiful shade that ever peeped out of any field.

"How do you like it, Polly?" Mrs. Fields asked, enjoying her amazement. "Will it do to be married in?"

"To be married yes, ma'am. But the dress is done already, and she is tired of it."

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We suppose all our readers have read the sorrowful story of "Enough Ardor" and the poor boy too fond of his great English past? It is the story of a white silk, heavy and batiste, for the boudoir; and on it miracles of blue and flowers; just the tenderest, most beautiful shade that ever peeped out of any field.

"How do you like it, Polly?" Mrs. Fields asked, enjoying her amazement.

"Will it do to be married in?"

"To be married yes, ma'am. But the dress is done already, and she is tired of it."

"And is there never to be but one bride for the sun to shine on?" We have thought it all over, dear Polly, and have decided to have a double wedding next Thursday. You and Phyllis have shared evil days, and now you must share evil days, and the same days.

The dress is Edgar's gift," she continued, as she saw that Polly was too much overcome to speak, "and the rest of the things are from your mother, dear. If I had selected the dress, it should have been all white; but there's no accounting for a man's taste, and this is her, Polly, to wear ruffles, too!"

And tossing off the covers there was exposed to view a train of ruffles, so much like those over which Polly had been busying herself, that, for a moment, she thought they were the same.

"Old and good ruffles and ruffles in my, in my child, and Mrs. Edgar Fields must not be out of the fashion!"

One moment Polly stood, and feasted her eyes; the next she had both arms around Mrs. Field's neck, and was whispering in her ear.

No words of thanks, not refusals to take and wear the pretty things, not regrets of her own unworthiness—none of these.

It was only two words she spoke, but they came straight from the heart.

My

Hour after that, everything was easy, Polly told her just what she had been thinking of that evening, and thanked her in words that were eloquent with real feeling.

And Mrs. Fields locked the door, and perched herself to watch on the wonderful dress; and when she had turned her round and round to admire her, kissed her on both cheeks, and asked:

"Shall it be next Thursday, dear?"

And Polly blushed as red as a rose as she whispered:

"I don't see how I can help it!"

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